



Exercise: Mock Focus Group

This exercise can be done in groups of 6-10 people. (Real focus groups can be slightly larger, but because of time limits, a mock focus group may need to be smaller.)

Decide on one person to take the role as moderator and representative of an assessment planning team. Every person take a few minutes to fill out the “stakeholder information” section below, and then each person introduce themselves. Working from the list of suggested questions (see handout), choose 10-12 questions to discuss as a group, or develop a list of your own questions. For each question, every person briefly state their opinion, and then the whole group discusses the issue.

In a real focus group, all participants would be members of the same geographical community; in this mock focus group, your group may include people from different MPAs in different countries. Each person can answer the questions as they apply to their own community; the answers will still be informative to others from other communities.

At the end of the exercise, consider which questions were most useful. Which questions and what meeting format would you use if you conduct a focus group in your home community?

Stakeholder Information

Date:

Name:

Telephone/address:

Occupation:

Level of Education:

Native language:

Other languages that you speak:

Location:

National/regional/local organizations or associations, which you belong to:

**Suggestions for Focus Group Discussion Questions****Existing Tourism Presence:**

1. Does tourism currently exist in your community?

2. Is it beneficial to the community in terms of social, environmental and economic impacts?

3. Does tourism benefit you personally?

Existing Opinion on Tourists and the Social Impacts of Tourism:

1. What percentage of your tourists are local, regional, and international?

2. Have the numbers of tourists visiting your community increased in the last year?

3. Do you enjoy having tourists in your community?

4. What are the positive impacts of tourism on your community?

5. Currently, does your community experience any negative aspects associated with tourism? If so, please explain:



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6. How do you feel about tourists taking pictures in your destination/village?

7. Are there any “rules” or cultural customs that you feel tourists should obey? What are they?

8. Why are tourists attracted to your area? What are your most unique existing attractions?

9. What are your most unique attractions that have yet to be developed for tourism?

Infrastructure and Public Service Comments:

1. What services are needed in the community to make it more comfortable for residents and visitors?

2. Do you have policemen, firemen and medical emergency specialists in the community?

3. Do you think that visitors feel safe walking/traveling alone in the community? If not, why? How could this be improved?



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Natural Resources:

1. Do you feel that there is a strong link between tourism and natural resource protection?

2. Are the local natural resources managed at this time? If yes, by whom?

3. Is the community involved in the management of these resources?

4. Do you think that the community should have more or less involvement in the management of these resources?

5. How could the community improve the management of its natural resources?

6. Does the community benefit from protecting these resources?
 - If yes, how do they benefit? Do they recognize these benefits?

 - If not, how could they better understand these benefits?

7. Can you describe any benefits that you are personally receiving because these resources are protected?



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8. Do local people lose any benefits by protecting these resources?

9. How could tourism improve both your community's benefits and natural resource protection?

Stakeholder Recommendations:

1. What are your suggestions for future tourism development in this community?
What investments or improvements are of top priority?

2. If other activities, services, or products could be offered in your village or area, where do you think these activities or services should be located? Who should run them?

3. Are there other forms of development that you think would benefit the local residents more than sustainable tourism? If so, what are they?